4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
Johns Island

Mrs. Alice Wine

WE DO EVERYTHING FOR WESELF

Old times we never buy food. Man, you never used to buy nothing that time. Money use to never worry people but pay church and buy little things what you want or something like that. People raise the apple, they raise the fig tree, raise the plum, all kind of different thing. But now you got to see money. Money! You got to go for make money to buy. Is harder now. You got to work so hard to get a little bit of money. In that time you could get a quart of grits for two cents.

My daddy farm for heself. He raise he own food. We raise all vegetables. Something to keep in the barn in the winter. He plant corn, plant peas. He have sons plow. I do some too. And after we do all that, then they harvest 'em there in the barn. Then you ain't have to work in the winter.

Them times just a couple of stores, but you have to walk over seven miles to it. They sell food, but when you can plant your own, you make your own living. We have plenty chicken and have eggs and have plenty cows and have the milk. And my mother made butter--we own butter. Have we own churn and everything. Do everything for weself. So we never buy.

Those times people raise the tomatoes and the okra and can it. And they do that right now. They can it, they fix the bean, they dry the beans and the peas. They cut up the okra and they dry that.

My mother didn't never buy no kind of food. They make soap. They make plenty soap. But what they make it out, I don't know. They grind corn and make flour and grits. And we have the mortar and beat the rice. And meat, we kill the hog and put 'em in salt. End of the year, they put up hog. Kill the cow and have beef meat.

Daddy go in the creek and get we tub of fish--plenty fish that time. Get the fish out the creek--oshters, crab, mushel. Then we use to get them cookies five for a penny. Now cost penny a piece.

For clothes my daddy and mother they buy the cloth and make it. My mother had a machine and he do all his sewing.

512 505 (574) neighbor in the hospital of a nearby town. Young men sometimes go across the water again for recreation in town. Young women usually cannot drive either a boat or a car and are dependent upon some male family member for transportation if they wish to go into town for similar reasons. Electricity 365 came to the island in 1964 and changed the habits of the islanders considerably. Today television provides a major 207 517 source of recreation for most families in the evenings. Children of ten and eleven watch it many hours in the afternoons and evenings. 206 Telephones have been available since 1972. Some children engage in frequent and lengthy conversations with their mainland friends after school. A new boat 504 landing is scheduled for completion in 1977, which will be 505 large enough to accommodate a ferry. With its completion, reliance on small motor boats will be phased out and mainlanders will have easier access to the island. When the ferry becomes operational, it is probable that the community will become much less of a closed community in important ways.

512 (438) (574) Weekends are reserved for the major social activities of the community. Saturdays are devoted to shopping for major supplies in town, or for entertaining mainland visitors and relatives. The major social event of the week is the 512 796 Sunday morning church service. Most islanders walk two or three miles to the major church at the center of the island. (493) 491 A few families keep four-wheeled vehicles on the island, and older residents ride in these. Roads on the island are sandy

11: Johnson H-4,5 (no date) 1930
(1525-ca. 1880)
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
St. Helena Island

or at funerals, social life on St. Helena, as Miss Towne suggested in her complaint against the Frogmore people, was still by plantations. Distances on the Island were too great to enable any considerable amount of inter-plantation visiting. The old plantation names were retained, therefore, and though a man owned his little plot of the old master's land, he still regarded himself as belonging to the old plantation. He was a Tom Fripp Negro, a Frogmore Negro, or an Indian Hill Negro as the case might be, and he usually "pleasured himself" with his "own people."

To the customary holidays of slavery times, the freedmen added three others, the Fourth of July, Decoration Day, and Emancipation Day, celebrations introduced under northern influence. Dr. J. M. Hawks, who was stationed in the conquered territory during the early days of the occupation of Port Royal, wrote to his wife, "Where I live, we [*sic*] the negroes had a great celebration on the fourth, first at 6 A. M. raised a big flag to the top of the cupalo, . . . Then they had a regular barbecue—a beef was killed and roasted a la mode Southern. P. M. dancing commenced and was kept up all the rest of the day. Our Supts. and Schoolmaster and an officer joined in the dance."[22]

The people of St. Helena modified the celebration until it came to be an occasion centering chiefly about Corner Store. There in the grove of trees opposite the store, people from all over the Island erected their stands until the string of tables reached out to a task's length. There were so many trying to sell that there was scarcely any one left to buy.

[22] MS in Hawks Letters. J. M. Hawks to Esther Hawks, July 6, 1862.